

## Contributions

### RELIGION IN EVOLUTION

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It is a stereotyped sentiment that "man is a religious animal." The statement is paradoxical. Animals are not religious. They have no moral sense, neither do they possess the quality of veneration. The religious element in man is an endowment, inherent in his nature. It is composed of the properties of the moral sense and conscience and is quickened by veneration, love, fear, and finds expression in adoration and propitiation.

Propitiation is the lowest form of religion, or, speaking in common parlance, of worship. It arises from fear. It comes from a dim, vague idea that a God exists somewhere whose business it is to chastise man. Deep in the inner recesses of man's consciousness there exists the dark shadow of the supernatural and the infinite, and impelled by the motion of fear, he intuitively recognizes his importance and thinks to get on amicable terms with it by propitiation. Man illustrates this trait in his dealings with the powerful of his own species. He courts their favor or help by sacrifices.

The first impression that the supernatural makes on the untutored mind is thro the manifestation of power, and that suggests danger and that impels to the lowest form of worship, "propitiation." Thunder, lightning, storms, epidemics, death, all are phenomena that suggest the existence of a power far exceeding that possessed by man, and, with the suggestion of the existence of this power he obtains the first crude idea of religion.

Our earliest religious emotions are rarely suggested by the love of the being we call God. As a matter of fact and experience we know very little of the attributes of that mysterious being at an immature age. We see evidences of power all about us. We are conscious of that before we note the evidences of beneficence in which that power manifests itself, at an age so immature that we can hardly recall the first experience. We feel the mysterious presence of this power among our earliest emotions and, touching, as it does, the hidden springs of the religious element in our organism we give expression to it in one or more of the several forms of worship. These qualities of the mind and heart, in their undeveloped state, create the forms of worship extant in the most primitive stages of society.

Another kindred religious phenomena is that found in the conception of the Infinite being which finds its expression in self imposed affliction either mental or physical. Thus in all nations yet in

a semi-civilized state we find men and women who choose lives of poverty and ignorance and spend their lives in monasteries, nunneries and cloisters. Monks, nuns, hermits, etc., only exist where the idea prevails that God is displeased with those who use the blessing liberally with which he endows his creatures and, with them ignorance, physical uncleanness, shabbiness of attire, and poverty of diet, are noted as the loftiest among the virtues. Enamored of their supposed merits they esteem them higher than the revealed Word. They would annul the divine arrangement enunciated by St. Paul in Tim. 6:17. "God gives us richly all things to enjoy." It is not infrequent that we find among the religious elements, this unnatural monstrosity, the deifying of man by himself in exalting his own conceptions of duty above that of the divine revelation.

Another manifestation of the crude religious element is the veneration of the antique, the ancient, and, with the untutored, either spiritual or mental, veneration assumes the phase of worship. We naturally venerate our ancestors, extol their virtues and admire their customs and age lends its enchantment and step by step the mind and heart reveal a stage which does not hesitate to deify what revelation only teaches us to respect and even that with solemn warnings. Solomon says, "Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these, for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." Eccl. 7:10.

This mental degeneracy gave rise to relic worship. Momentos of the beloved dead were preserved by the affection of one generation and worshiped by the simple credulity of the next and the next. There has been no age of the world and no country when and where mankind have not fallen into the ever present temptation to exalt his ideas of divinity and duty above all that is called God. It arises from the inborn pride in the natural heart, and the desire for dominion; and man is as ready and willing to dominate the conscience and heart of his fellows as he is his body. This has bred all the dreadful persecutions which cruelty devised to tear conscience from the throne on which God placed it. Those persecutions were the offsprings of treason to the divine word and only appear where man makes his devices and imaginations equal or superior to that word. Its cognomen is Phariseism and wherever human devices and orders and creeds exist we find the genius and spirit of that most deadly foe to higher spiritual development.

The last and highest state to which the religious element attains is love. Love is ethereal, a fundamental quality of Deity. It exalts its object above all things else, whether it be the bride at

the altar, the wife in the home, the child on the knee, or God at the shrine. Love sees nought but the object of its impulses, and hears nought but the voice of the well beloved. His word is first and last, final and supreme, and he spurns as treason all suggestions to the contrary. With him, Rev. 22:17, is an inevitable result. This form of worship inspires adoration and is its highest present expression and only on this high plane do we become the sons of God as taught in John's first letter, chap. 3:2.

In the foregoing we have the elements of religion in their crude, original form and in their various stages of development, and their consequent crystallization results from an element in our nature which we denominate spiritual collusion, the coalescing of kindred properties. Thus the church is evolved and those of "like precious faith" find genial and congenial atmosphere, and they glorify God by making this word their only rule of faith and practice.

### A CALL TO DUTY

H. P. BRINKWORTH

Oh, how often we fail to thank God for his goodness, his kindness, his long-suffering and his great mercies to us; Why we are so neglectful, so forgetful may probably never be known, yet dear reader, are not you often forgetting to thank God for favors and blessings which you are very grateful for when you think of it. I verily believe we need to have stated times of praise and prayer, as Daniel, morning, noon, and night, and as Paul says, Pray everywhere, at all times give thanks. Oh, God's mercies are so great, so wonderfully great to you and me. We should clap our hands and rejoice in the God of our salvation for he hath redeemed us—he hath bought us—and has purchased us with blood. Oh such a price, and what hast thou done for him? Oh, what are you doing now? Are you working for him daily, yea, honestly. He deserves every moment of our lives, consecrated lives to his service. Are there not some who have thought that they should do more for Jesus? I appeal to you in this article, why not do so now?

There are many missionaries going out in King Emmanuel's service to foreign lands, crossing the seas and oceans, but I hear of whole counties in these United States with hardly a church and where the work of the Lord is not carried out as it should be, volunteers are needed. Drafted men into any service cannot be compared with volunteers, who will rise and respond. I will go, I will devote, God helping me, my life to his service. Oh, young men and young ladies, you have talents for Jesus. Will you respond and go and teach all nations? Your commission in Mat-